

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-24. (Cancelled)

25. (New) A method of providing access to objects on a computer network comprising the steps of:

initializing a phicon, said phicon comprising a machine-readable tag having a resource identifier encoded thereon, said resource identifier identifying a memory location at a provider server, said initializing step comprising the sub-steps of:

presenting the phicon to a phicon-reading appliance;

contacting the provider server using the resource identifier read from the phicon by the phicon-reading appliance;

creating a network object at the memory location identified by the resource identifier;

placing at least one pointer in the created network object, said at least one pointer identifying at least one data object, whereby the created network object can provide access to a plurality of data objects having arbitrary sizes; and

accessing the at least one data object using said initialized phicon, said accessing step comprising the sub-steps of:

presenting, by an accessing user, the phicon to the phicon-reading appliance;

contacting the provider server using the resource identifier read from the phicon by the phicon-reading appliance; and

presenting to the accessing user the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer, whereby the accessing user may interact with the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

26. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the step of creating the network object is performed by the provider server in response to the step of contacting the provider server using the resource identifier.

27. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the step of creating the network object is performed before the step of contacting the provider server using the resource identifier.

28. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprises the sub-step of:

providing to the accessing user means for modifying at least one of the network object and the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

29. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the means for modifying can also change a size of the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

30. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprises the sub-step of:

providing to the accessing user means for deleting at least one of the network object, the at least one pointer, and the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

31. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprise the sub-step of:

providing to the accessing user means for adding at least one other pointer to the network object.

32. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the at least one data object comprises at least one of software, a document file, a spread sheet file, a video file, an image file, an audio file, and a hyperlink to another data object.

33. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the phicon-reading appliance reads the phicon using at least one of OCR characters, MICR characters, bar code, magnetic stripe, RF patch antenna, printed circuit, short-range RF transmission, and infrared transmission.

34. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the step of accessing the network object further comprises the sub-step of:

resolving, using the at least one pointer, a location of the at least one data object.

35. (New) The method of claim 34, wherein the sub-step of presenting to the accessing user the at least one data object comprises the step of:

retrieving the at least one data object using the resolved location.

36. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the resource identifier comprises a network URL.

37. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the at least one pointer comprises a network URL.

38. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the sub-step of placing the at least one pointer in the network object, said at least one pointer identifying at least one data object, comprises the step of:

moving, on a graphical user interface (GUI), an icon representing the at least one data object into, on top of, or otherwise inside an icon representing the network object, whereby the at least one pointer identifying the at least one data object is created within the network object.

39. (New) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of:

re-using the phicon by deleting the at least one pointer in the network object and placing another at least one pointer in the network object.

40. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the initializing step further comprises the sub-step of:

providing means for defining access criteria for accessing the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

41. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the access criteria comprises a password.

42. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprises the sub-steps of:

determining whether the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer is subject to restricted access;

if the at least one data object is subject to restricted access, determining whether the user has entered a correct password for restricted access before providing access to the at least one data object.

43. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein an initializing user performs the initializing step and the accessing user performs the accessing step, and wherein, before the accessing step, the method further comprises the step of:

transferring possession of the phicon from the initializing user to the accessing user.

44. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the at least one data object is associated with one of an issue of a printed publication, demographic information related to distribution channels of copies of a printed publication, and an intended recipient of a copy of a printed publication; wherein the accessing user is a recipient of a copy of the printed publication; and wherein possession of the phicon is transferred to the accessing user by inserting the phicon into the copy of the printed publication.

45. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprises the sub-step of:

presenting to the accessing user the network object.

46. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the accessing step further comprises the sub-step of:

presenting to the accessing user the at least one pointer.

47. (New) A system for providing access to objects on a computer network comprising:

a provider server on the computer network;

a phicon comprising a machine-readable tag having a resource identifier encoded thereon, wherein said resource identifier identifies a memory location at the provider server;

a phicon-reading appliance for reading the resource identifier encoded on the machine-readable tag on the phicon;

a data processor connected to the phicon-reading appliance and connected to the computer network, said data processor for receiving the read resource identifier from the phicon-reading appliance and for accessing a network object in the provider server at the memory location identified by the read resource identifier, wherein said network object is capable of containing a plurality of pointers providing access to a plurality of data objects having arbitrary sizes;

a means operable on said data processor for placing at least one pointer in the network object, said at least one pointer identifying at least one data object;

a means for presenting the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer to a user; and

a means by which a user may interact with the presented at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

48. (New) The system of claim 47, wherein the means operable on said data processor comprises at least one of software, hardware, and firmware.

49. (New) The system of claim 47, wherein the means for presenting comprises:

a means operable on said data processor for creating a graphical user interface (GUI) in which at least one manipulatable display icon represents at least one of the network

object, the at least one pointer, and the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer, wherein manipulating said at least one manipulatable display icon effects the subject the at least one manipulatable display icon represents; and
a display for displaying the GUI.

50. (New) The system of claim 49, wherein moving, on the GUI, an icon representing at least one data object into, on top of, or otherwise inside an icon representing the network object causes at least one pointer identifying the at least one data object to be created within the network object.

51. (New) The system of claim 47, wherein the means by which the user may interact with the presented at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer comprises:

a means operable on said data processor for modifying the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

52. (New) The system of claim 51, wherein the means operable on said data processor for modifying can also change a size of the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

53. (New) The system of claim 47, wherein the means by which the user may interact with the presented at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer comprises:

a means operable on said data processor for deleting at least one of the network object, the at least one pointer, and the at least one data object identified by the at least one pointer.

54. (New) The system of claim 47, further comprising:

a means operable on said data processor for adding at least one other pointer to the network object.

55. (New) The system of claim 47, wherein the at least one data object comprises at least one of software, a document file, a spread sheet file, a video file, an image file, an audio file, and a hyperlink to another data object.

56. (New) The system of claim 47, further comprising:
means operable on said data processor for presenting the network object.

57. (New) The system of claim 47, further comprising:
means operable on said data processor for presenting the at least one pointer.

58. (New) A phicon comprising:
a machine-readable tag having a resource identifier encoded thereon, said resource identifier identifying a memory location at a provider server, wherein:
said resource identifier encoded in said machine-readable tag may be read by a phicon-reading appliance; and
when said resource identifier is read by said phicon-reading appliance, a network object at the memory location identified by the resource identifier is accessed, said network object being capable of containing a plurality of pointers providing access to a plurality of data objects having arbitrary sizes, and at least one manipulable display icon representing at least one of said network object, a pointer in said network object, and/or a data object identified by a pointer in said network object is presented on a Graphical User Interface (GUI);
whereby said phicon can provide access to an arbitrary number of data objects of arbitrary size in arbitrary memory locations.

59. (New) The phicon of claim 58, when said resource identifier is read for the first time by said phicon-reading appliance, said network object is created at the memory location identified by the resource identifier in the provider server.

60. (New) The phicon of claim 58, when said resource identifier is read for the first time by said phicon-reading appliance, said network object already exists at the memory location identified by the resource identifier in the provider server.

61. (New) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium, said computer program being operative for creating a Graphical User Interface (GUI) on a display, comprising:

processor-executable instructions for creating at least one manipulatable display icon in the GUI, wherein the at least one manipulatable display icon represents at least one network object, at least one pointer, and/or at least one data object, and wherein manipulating said at least one manipulatable display icon in the GUI effects the subject represented by the at least one manipulatable display icon;

wherein each of the at least one network object is at a unique memory location on a provider server, said memory location being identified by a machine-readable tag on a phicon, and each of the at least one network object is capable of containing a plurality of pointers providing access to a plurality of data objects having arbitrary sizes; and

wherein, when a phicon-reading appliance reads a machine-readable tag on a phicon, the GUI created by said computer program is displayed on a display and at least one manipulatable display icon is displayed in the GUI, said at least one manipulatable display icon representing at least one of a network object at the memory location identified by the machine-readable tag on the phicon, at least one pointer in said network object, and/or at least one data object identified by a pointer in said network object;

whereby, when a user moves an icon representing at least one data object into, on top of, or otherwise inside an icon representing a network object in the GUI, a pointer identifying said at least one data object is created within said network object.

62. (New) A server for providing access to data objects using a phicon comprising:

a plurality of memory locations, each memory location being identified by a resource identifier encoded in a machine-readable tag on the phicon, each memory location capable of having a network object, said network object being capable of containing a plurality of pointers providing access to a plurality of data objects having arbitrary sizes; and

means for communicating via a connection to the computer network, wherein a phicon-reading appliance for reading the resource identifier encoded on the machine-readable tag on the phicon can be connected to a data processor which can be connected to the computer network, and wherein said data processor can receive the read resource identifier from the phicon-reading appliance and access a network object in the server at the memory location identified by the read resource identifier;

wherein a user using the phicon can access an arbitrary number of data objects of arbitrary size in arbitrary memory locations on the computer network by means of said phicon-reading appliance, said data processor, and said server.